

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice CRP-372

For: State and County Offices

CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A

Background

Continuous signup was established to provide producers with management flexibility when planning conservation practices needed in their farming operations to address highly desirable environmental priority resource concerns. The practices available under the continuous signup provide high environmental benefits such as enhanced water quality, reduced wind and water erosion, and reduced sedimentation. Although the practices and acreage enrolled under continuous signup are generally small areas, the benefits obtained generally impact a much larger area.

The enrollment of contour grass strips on terraces is currently prohibited. A new practice has been developed to address enrollment of contour grass strips on terraces under certain conditions.

B

Purpose

This notice provides policy and practice writeup for a newly authorized practice for continuous CRP signup, CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips) on Terraces, for land that is not under a practice lifespan or other agreement to maintain the terrace practice and seeding is needed and feasible. The practice protects water quality and reduces soil erosion.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2001	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices, and NRCS State Offices

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2 CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces

A

Purpose of CP15B

This practice establishes vegetative cover on terraces that are no longer under practice lifespan to ensure that long-term functions are maintained.

Notes: CP15B is not authorized for the areas between terraces.

Cropland eligibility criteria in 2-CRP, paragraph 82 apply.

B

CP15B Requirements

The practice writeup for CP15B is in Exhibit 1. In addition, contour grass strips on terraces must:

- maintain the functions of terraces (the terrace must not be in existing cover)
- be installed on the terrace
- **not** be installed on terraces that were installed through a Federal or State program and are currently under practice lifespan or other agreement to maintain the terrace practice, as determined by COC
- meet the cover requirement for appropriate terraces consistent with NRCS FOTG and all requirements in Exhibit 1.

COC's shall only approve CRP-1's for practice CP15B provided both of the following are met:

- meet all the requirements of 2-CRP, Part 5, Section 1
- contour grass strips on terraces are alternated with wider cultivated strips.

Note: Terraces currently under practice lifespan are not eligible for CP15B.

C

Availability and Incentive Level

CP15B is only authorized under continuous signup. Practice incentive payments and SIP do not apply to CP15B.

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3 Action

A

FSA State Office Action

FSA State Offices shall:

- immediately provide a copy of this notice to the NRCS State Office
 - immediately provide a copy of this notice to County Offices
 - ensure that County Offices:
 - understand the purpose of CP15B
 - do **not** approve any CRP-1 for any practice that does not meet the requirements of the practice, including the purpose and size, according to 2-CRP, Exhibit 9 and Exhibit 1 of this notice.
-

B

County Office Action

FSA County Offices shall:

- immediately provide a copy of this notice to the local NRCS field office
 - **not** approve any CRP-1 for CP15B that does not meet the requirements of the practice, including the purpose and size, according to Exhibit 1.
-

C

NRCS State Office Action

State NRCS Offices shall ensure that NRCS Field Offices ensure that all CRP practices meet the requirements of the practice, including the purpose and size, according to Exhibit 1.

D

NRCS Field Office Action

NRCS Field Offices shall:

- ensure that all CP15B practices meet the requirements of FOTG and the practice, including the purpose and size, according to Exhibit 1
 - immediately correct any misleading publications about the eligibility and purpose of CP15B.
-

E

NRCS National Office Concurrence

NRCS has concurred with this notice.

CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces

A**Purpose**

The purpose of this practice is to establish vegetative cover on terraces to enhance water quality and reduce soil erosion. This practice is only applicable on terraces that are no longer under practice lifespan to ensure that the long term functions of the terrace are maintained.

Note: The purpose of this practice is not to develop or establish wildlife habitat.

Important: NRCS must document that CP15B is needed and feasible on the AD-682 and CRP-2. This practice is only available on existing terraces that are no longer under the practice lifespan or other agreement to maintain the terrace practice.

Note: NRCS will determine the documentation needed to support the need for CP15B consistent with FOTG standards. The documentation must be in the case file.

Example: A terrace was installed under ACP in 1985. The practice lifespan was 10 years. The terrace is not in a vegetative cover and is functional. NRCS determines grass seeding is needed and feasible to enhance water quality and reduce soil erosion. This terrace is eligible to be enrolled in CRP as CP15B.

B**Program Policy**

Apply this practice on eligible cropland on which a terrace, that is not planted to a vegetative cover, is no longer under the practice lifespan, but seeding is needed and feasible consistent with the purposes of the practice. The area to be included is the actual terrace itself and an adequate buffer. See subparagraph C for size requirements of the buffer area.

Contour grass strips on terraces shall be installed to the minimum design standard to ensure long-term viability of the terraces to reduce erosion and enhance water quality.

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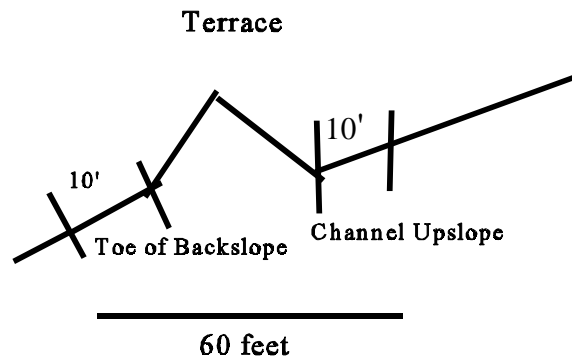
**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)**

**C
Size
Requirements**

Minimum size standard for a contour buffer strip on terraces shall be the minimum size necessary to protect the terraces. It may require a buffer not to exceed 10 feet on the upslope and downslope portion of the terrace. The maximum width of the CP15B must not exceed 60 feet, including the buffer areas.

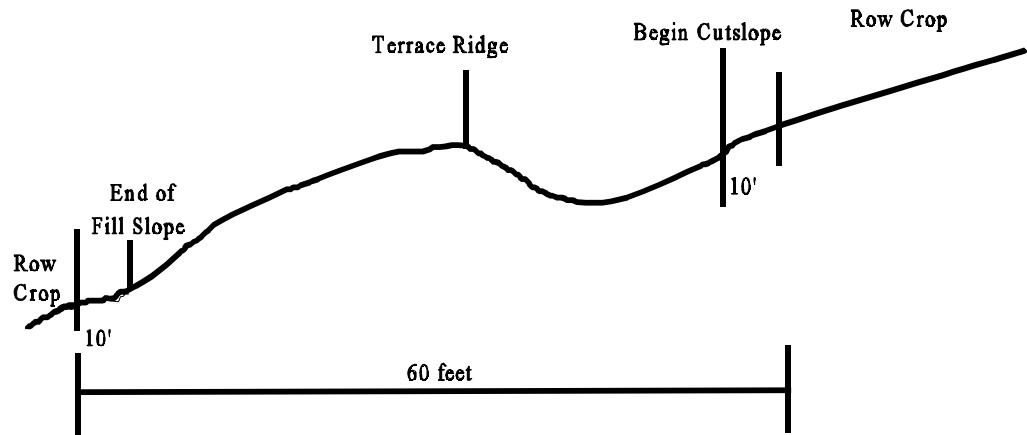
The practice shall be designed to control soil erosion consistent with NRCS FOTG.

The following diagrams provide examples of the maximum width for CP15B.

Example 1 Grassed Back Terrace

Note: The area of the CP15B must not exceed 60 feet from the toe of the backslope side of the terrace to the channel upslope, including the 10 foot buffer area on either side of the terrace.

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**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)****C
Size
Requirements
(Continued)****Example 2 Broad Based Terraces**

Note: The area of the CP15B is measured from the beginning of the cutslope to the end of the Fill slope. A 10 foot buffer may be included on either side of the terrace. In no case shall a CP15B exceed 60 feet wide, including the 10 feet buffer on each side of terrace.

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**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)**

D**Eligibility**

To be eligible for C/S, this practice shall:

- be on eligible cropland
- be installed on terraces that NRCS determines are properly functioning and are no longer protected by practice lifespan or other agreement to maintain the terrace practice

Note: An adjacent buffer not to exceed 10 feet on the upslope and downslope may be installed provided NRCS determines it is needed and feasible.

- not be installed on terraces that are currently in a vegetative cover
- be applicable only where seeding is needed and feasible
- be maintained for the CRP-1 period
- be included in the approved conservation plan.

Examples: A producer would like to enroll into CRP an existing terrace that has been in grass cover for the past 5 years. The terrace would **not** be eligible.

A producer would like to enroll into CRP a terrace. The terrace as determined by NRCS is not functioning properly. The terrace would **not** be eligible unless it is repaired.

Continued on the next page

**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)**

E**C/S Policy**

This table shows C/S policies for this practice.

IF the component is...	AND the justification is...	THEN C/S is...
minerals	substantiated as needed by COC	authorized.
eligible seed		
seedbed preparation		
seeding		
herbicides	specified as necessary in the approved conservation plan	
insecticides		
temporary cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• required in the practice specifications• needed until required seed or plant stock is available• needed because normal planting period for the species has passed• that a soil condition, such as chemical residue, will not allow establishment of cover immediately	
grading, leveling, and filling	to control concentrated flow and site preparation	
herbicides	to maintain vegetative cover	not authorized.
insecticides		
earthmoving	to establish contour grass strips	
clearing rocks or other obstructions from the area to be seeded		
fencing		
minerals	to enhance production	

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**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)**

**F
Requirements**

The following are requirements for this practice.

- Must meet cropping history.
- Must not be under a practice lifespan or other agreement to maintain the terrace system, as determined by COC.
- Seeding the terrace must be needed and feasible to accomplish the purposes of the practice.
- Must be installed on a terrace that NRCS determines is properly functioning.
- Must only be for the actual terrace and a buffer not to exceed 10 feet on the upslope and downslope side of the structure.

Note: The CP15B must not exceed a maximum width of 60 feet, including the buffer areas.

- Limit C/S to the minimum minerals and seed necessary to establish adequate cover consistent with NRCS FOTG.
- The acreage shall not be hayed or grazed for the life of CRP-1.
- Chemicals used in performing the practice must be:
 - Federally, State, and locally registered
 - applied according to authorized registered uses, directions on the label, and other Federal or State policies and requirements.
- Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled, including such maintenance as necessary to avoid an adverse impact on surrounding lands.
- The seeded acreage shall not be harvested or grazed by domestic livestock for the life of CRP-1, unless grazing is incidental to the normal gleaning of the crop residue in the field according to 2-CRP, paragraph 241 D.

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**CP15B, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips), On Terraces
(Continued)**

G**Planting
Timespan**

Planting or sowing of the approved cover shall be completed within 12 months of the effective date of CRP-1.

H**Environ-
mental
Concerns**

Although the purpose of the practice is not to establish wildlife habitat, consider wildlife concerns when making determinations about seed varieties and other practice specifications.

I**Practice
Maintenance**

The practice shall be maintained without additional C/S for the CRP-1 period. C/S shall be refunded if:

- producer destroys the cover during the CRP-1 period
 - cover fails to provide enhancement of environmental benefits during the practice lifespan unless caused by circumstances beyond the producer's control.
-

J**Program
Development**

County practice language shall include the practice lifespan. County program language shall also provide details of any requirements, such as seedbed preparation, seeding dates, eligible seed, etc., that are conditions for C/S for the practice. STC may establish these requirements.

K**Technical
Responsibility**

NRCS shall have technical responsibility for this practice.
